

That Which is Claimed is:

1. Apparatus for applying a biocide liquid composition to billets formed from sugar cane stalks, the apparatus being comprised of a container for containing the liquid composition, a conduit in fluid communication with the container, and one or more nozzles in fluid communication with the conduit, the apparatus being sized and configured for connection to a billet-type sugar cane harvester so that the nozzles are disposed to direct the liquid composition onto the billets either before or as they are received by a hopper configured to receive the billets dispensed from the harvester during operation of the harvester.
2. Apparatus according to Claim 1 further comprising pressurizing means for pressurizing the liquid composition fed into the conduit.
3. Apparatus according to Claim 2 wherein the pressurizing means is a pump.
4. Apparatus according to Claim 3 further comprising a controller for controlling the dispensing of liquid composition through the one or more nozzles.
5. Apparatus according to Claim 1 further comprising a controller for controlling the dispensing of liquid composition through the one or more nozzles.
6. Apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the one or more nozzles are disposed around the periphery of a chute of a billet conveyor portion of the harvest so as to direct the liquid composition onto the billets while they pass through the chute during operation of the harvester.
7. Apparatus according to Claim 6 further comprising pressurizing means for pressurizing the liquid composition fed into the conduit.
8. Apparatus according to Claim 7 wherein the pressurizing means is a pump.

9. Apparatus according to Claim 8 further comprising a controller for controlling the dispensing of liquid composition through the one or more nozzles.
10. Apparatus according to Claim 1 wherein the one or more nozzles are disposed around the periphery of the hopper so as to direct the liquid composition onto the billets as they fall into the hopper during operation of the harvester.
11. Apparatus according to Claim 10 further comprising pressurizing means for pressurizing the liquid composition fed into the conduit.
12. Apparatus according to Claim 11 wherein the pressurizing means is a pump.
13. Apparatus according to Claim 12 further comprising a controller for controlling the dispensing of the liquid composition through the one or more nozzles.
14. In a billet-type sugar cane harvester, the improvement which comprises one or more nozzles disposed at the periphery of the down-spout of a billet conveyor portion of the harvester, a conduit in fluid communication with the one or more nozzles for supplying a flow of a liquid biocide composition to the one or more nozzles, and a container for storing the liquid biocide composition and dispensing the same into the conduit.
15. The improvement according to Claim 14, further comprising pressurizing means for pressurizing the liquid composition dispensed from the container and into the conduit.
16. The improvement according to Claim 15 wherein the pressurizing means is a pump.
17. The improvement according to Claim 16 further comprising a controller for controlling the dispensing of the liquid composition through the one or more nozzles.

18. The improvement according to Claim 14 further comprising a controller for controlling the dispensing of the liquid composition through the one or more nozzles.

19. A method of inhibiting microbial degradation of one or more components of sugar cane billets formed from sugar cane stalks, the method comprising the step of applying a biocidal liquid composition to the billets while the billets are either conveyed through or dispensed from a billet-type sugar cane harvester.

20. A method according to Claim 19, wherein the liquid composition is applied while the billets are falling through a chute of a conveyor of the harvester.